

Modalities and Principles of Decentralized Cooperation of Sub-state Governments in Europe¹¹²

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Abstract

A recent survey carried out by the OECD and the European Union (OECD, 2018) shows a tangible increase in the engagement of sub-state governments from the EU countries as international donors. Not only the increase affects the total volume of cooperation in economic terms, but it also leads to the transformation of political relations within the states (i.e. central-regional-local interrelations). Having recognized that the current literature covers only in a limited way a phenomenon of sub-state governments as full-fledged stakeholders in development the aim of the article is twofold. First, the article poses a question of what are the modalities and forms of decentralized cooperation adopted by sub-state governments from the European countries. Second, it raises a question of the diversification of the guiding principles of such policies. The data has been gathered through the in-depth analysis of documents, reports, strategies, as well as it has been complemented by the semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted with the representatives of the selected sub-state governments and cooperating actors. The article looks at the modalities and principles of selected sub-state governments of Belgium, Spain, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Keywords: decentralized cooperation in development; sub-state governments; partnership in development; participatory development; reciprocity.

Résumé

Une étude récente réalisée par l'OCDE et l'Union européenne (OCDE, 2018) montre une augmentation considérable de l'engagement des gouvernements infranationaux en tant que donateurs internationaux dans les pays de l'UE. Non seulement cette augmentation affecte le volume total de la coopération en termes économiques, mais elle conduit également à une transformation des aspects politiques au sein des États (c'est-à-dire des interrelations centre-régional-local). Ayant reconnu que la littérature actuelle ne couvre que de manière limitée le phénomène des gouvernements infranationaux en tant qu'acteurs à part entière du développement, le but de cet article est double. Premièrement, l'article pose la question quelles sont les modalités et les formes de la coopération décentralisée adoptées par les instances sous-étatiques des pays européens. Deuxièmement, cela soulève la question de la diversification

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des principes directeurs de ces politiques. Les données ont été recueillies au moyen d'une analyse approfondie de documents, de rapports et de stratégies, complétées par des entretiens qualitatifs semi-structurés menés avec les représentants des gouvernements locaux des États et des acteurs coopérants sélectionnés. L'article examine les modalités et les principes de certains gouvernements sous-étatiques de Belgique, Espagne, Allemagne et Royaume-Uni.

Mots clés: coopération décentralisée dans le développement ; gouvernements locaux ; gouvernements infranationaux ; partenariat dans le développement ; développement participatif ; réciprocité.

Introduction

The shift in development cooperation which was introduced in the 1990s and fostered by the setting up of Millennium Development Goals triggered the international discussion of the new frontiers of cooperation between the North- and South-partner countries. The tangible trend is the rising role of non-traditional donors. The emergence of new stakeholders is thus associated with a shift in paradigm that makes out of development cooperation an overarching global aim that requires mobilization at any political and social level. In the European context, politically and functionally embedded in the framework of multi-level governance, the attention is also driven towards local and regional governments. A recent survey carried out by the OECD and the European Union (OECD, 2018) shows a tangible increase in engagement of sub-state governments of the EU countries as international donors, specifically when compared with a similar survey carried out in 2005 (OECD, 2005). Not only the increase affects the total volume of cooperation in economic terms, but it also leads to the transformation of political relations within the states. Under the term of the so-called decentralized cooperation in development, the sub-state governments of the European Union internationally perform activities through bilateral and multilateral channels, conclude partnerships with the counterparts in developing countries and develop their programs, initiatives, and policies.

The article provides an overview of the current practices and principles behind decentralized cooperation in development conducted by selected sub-state governments from the European Union. The cases were limited to sub-state governments from Belgium (Flanders, Wallonia), Germany (Baden-Württemberg, Hamburg), Spain (Catalonia), and the United Kingdom (Scotland, Wales). The limitation is imposed due to structural and operational reasons. All the selected sub-state governments are engaged in decentralized cooperation, they launched their programs and policies, concluded partnerships and allocated funds for the policy. On the other hand, they present diversified political systems, with the divergent constitutional settings and international competencies assigned to them. The empirical basis for the article consists of an analysis of documents, strategies, and reports concerning the activities in decentralized cooperation at the local level. The analysis has been supplemented by a series of interviews conducted with the representatives of sub-state governments, the organizations cooperating with governments in the management of financial mechanisms, and the non-governmental sector. The article is divided into three major sections. It begins with the presentation of decentralized cooperation. To this end, it shows that although decentralized cooperation is a well-recognized concept within the practice of development

cooperation there is no single definition thereof. In the second part, the article presents modalities and forms of decentralized cooperation giving particular attention to the shift from vertical towards the horizontal dimension of direct cooperation between North- and South-partner countries. In the third section, it denotes the principles of decentralized cooperation based on particular examples of sub-state governments. For this purpose, the article presents the notions of coordination, responsiveness, participation, and reciprocity as driving principles of the development policy of sub-state governments.

1. Decentralized cooperation in development: the origins of a concept

The concept of decentralized cooperation as a recognized practice in development is generally traceable to the 1980s. Yet, the origins of decentralized cooperation are to be found in the practice of town twinning that emerged in Europe in the post-war period. As noted by Antoine Vion town twinning presents “the first step taken by municipalities to define their interests on the international stage” (Vion, 2002, p. 623). Although in the early days twinning practices were established between the German and British or American towns (Langenohl, 2015, p. 17), the literature on this phenomenon is biased towards identifying the roots of post-war town twinning in the cooperation between the German and French towns as a symbolic reconciliation (cf. Farquharson and Holt, 2016; Campbell, 1987; Filipová, 2015). The symbolic dimension refers to the need for the rapprochement of societies, which were previously framed as enemies (cf. Falkenheim *et al.* 2012). Additionally to the political sphere formed by the reconciliation desire, in the economic dimension the town twinning decreased the transaction costs between the cities, so over time the economic aspects of town twinning gained importance over the political (Brakman *et al.*, 2016, p. 1421). With the initial success on the European level, the concept of cooperation in a form of twinning has been extended to the Euro-African contacts, specifically in the decolonization process the local authorities from Europe engaged in the linking-creation with African counterparts. However, the modalities of the early-days decentralized cooperation at the municipal level were limited. Operationally, decentralized cooperation consisted of high-level visits, with the elements of cultural and sports events. Structurally, the prominent role in the early days of decentralized cooperation played mayors and civic leaders, and as such, the cooperation was limited to the town level (United Nations, 2000, p. 10).

The cooperation between the sub-state governments has been recognized as a means of development assistance soon after. For cities, the town twinning has been officially recognized as such in the UN Resolution of 1971. Yet, compared with the municipalities and cities, the cooperation between authorities at the regional level was not developed in the early days of development cooperation, with few exceptions in Germany. For instance, between 1962 and 1964, the federal state of Baden-Württemberg carried out a pioneering external development assistance project in Tunisia in cooperation with the federal government (Athenstaedt, 2011, pp. 64-65). The project appears, however, to be an exception. Generally, regional authorities have begun joining international cooperation since the 1980s and 1990s. In this way, decentralized cooperation embraced both cities and local and regional authorities. The multi-stakeholder rhetoric has been fostered after the Millennium Declaration which posed an ambitious goal to engage all individuals and groups to make

development cooperation a globalized issue. However, as noted by Manuel Duran the development cooperation was a significant step for regional governments to exercise their external relations, since “cooperation assistance is a central argument used by regional officials to justify the existence of paradiplomacy¹¹³” (Duran, 2016, p. 295). The Earth Summit of 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, along with the Habitat Agenda of 1996, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg held in August 2002 explicitly referred to local actors as actors in development, and confirmed the crucial role of local and regional governments in international cooperation, which goes far beyond the financial contribution.

Despite such wide recognition of decentralized cooperation as a means of development assistance, there is no single definition thereof, since it still “remains an evolving concept” in the academic debates (de Losada, Barceló and Rebowska 2013, p. 11). Definitions vary from a donor-driven approach, focused on assistance delivered by the decentralized actors (e.g. OECD, the UNDP), to an issue-oriented approach, focused on the practice of exchange between development partners in both the North-South and South-South types of cooperation (e.g. the United Cities and Local Governments, UCLG). For the first time, the concept has been officially introduced at the EU level in the Fourth Lomé Convention of 1989, as an extension and formalized former so-called micro-projects co-financed from the EU budget since the First Lomé Convention (1975). However, the First Lomé Convention did not specify particular actors involved in the micro-projects, but instead, it limited the experiment to the particular areas (mainly agriculture). On the contrary, the Fourth Lomé Convention and further documents (cf. Council of the European Union, 1992; Council of the European Union, 1998) adopted an agent-based approach to decentralized cooperation. The EU encouraged economic, social and cultural organizations to participate in the process of grassroots development in the ACP countries (Africa-Caribbean-Pacific) in a form of a supplemental contribution to the general development cooperation policy of the EC. The overarching concept of decentralized cooperation denoted the cooperation in development as provided by

decentralized public authorities, rural and village groupings, cooperatives, firms, trade unions, teaching and research centers, non-governmental organizations, various associations and all groups and parties which are able and wish make their own spontaneous and original contribution to the development of ACP states (ACP-EEC Council of Ministers, 1992, art. 20).

Such a wide approach to the identification of actors in decentralized development cooperation was further reconceptualized. In 2006, the European Union has begun abandoning a large scope of decentralized cooperation and introduced changes. The Regulation 1905/2006 on establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation launched a new thematic program for two types of actors with distinctive budget lines – non-state actors and local authorities. Therefore, the approach to decentralized cooperation shifted from the identification of decentralized cooperation as a particular modality, towards the narrowly defined actor-oriented activity (de Losada, Barceló and Rebowska, 2013, p. 11).

113 The concept of paradiplomacy refers to the external activities carried out by the sub-state governments. Generally, literature distinguishes three dimensions of paradiplomacy: political, economic, and cultural (cf. Keating, 1999)-

The International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), an organization established in 1913 referred to decentralized cooperation as a concept essentially related to “development-focused activities which involve direct participation and funding of non-state organization and/or international partnership between locally based bodies” (IULA, 1997). On the other hand, UNDP focuses more on the inclusive aspects of decentralized cooperation concerning actors. Therefore, decentralized cooperation is understood as a modality of cooperation in which local, sub-national, CSOs, NGOs, private sector, and academia work together on an equal footing with the counterparts in other countries to address the needs which are identified locally and managed by the local and regional authorities (UNDP, 2013, pp. 26-27). The diversification of the meaning of decentralized cooperation is experienced also at the national and sub-national levels. For instance, in the context of Spain and Belgium, where autonomous communities or regions are to a large extent independent of the central government in conducting development assistance, decentralized cooperation remains a significant concept. Both in the context of Spain (Law 23/1998 on International Cooperation in Development) and Belgium (Law on Cooperation in Development 2013) decentralized cooperation is formally recognized through the nationwide laws which mention sub-state governments as actors in development cooperation. Additionally, certain regions have passed their regulations, as Catalonia (Law on Development Cooperation 26/2001) or Flanders (Framework Decree on Development Cooperation of 2007). The meaning of the term decentralized cooperation varies from the identification of a concept as a local public policy (Flanders, Belgium) to inter-municipal cooperation on projects which transcend state borders and are implemented by local and regional authorities (Germany) (OECD 2018, p. 27). Despite differences, there is a common core of decentralized cooperation definitions which, as noted by Pierre Hafteck, concentrates around four dimensions: (1) leading actors: local, regional and sub-state governments; (2) broad purpose: delivering development at the local level in the South partner countries; (3) means of cooperation: mainly limited to the exchange of people, sharing know-how, training; (4) strong participation of CSOs and NGOs sectors: collaboration between local and regional authorities with non-governmental sectors, also at the implementation stage (Hafteck, 2003, p. 336).

2. Forms of decentralized cooperation in development: European practice

Over recent decades, the definition of decentralized cooperation has been predominantly limited to the identification of actors to whom the concept refers. Since there is a consensus that decentralized cooperation is mainly limited to local and regional authorities, the diversification of activities under decentralized cooperation is more disputable. Although, generally direct cooperation remains a predominant type, in the context of European local and regional authorities, the types and modalities are far more diversified (cf. de Losada Passols, 2017, p. 9-11). Along with the conventional direct cooperation, indirect cooperation, as a type of cooperation provided through the local-based NGOs and CSOs becomes more common among the European sub-state governments. The specific case is delegated cooperation. Although traditionally performed by national agencies, it has recently begun to attract regional authorities. Apart from external activities, a substantial number of sub-state governments developed a domestic dimension

of development – activities aiming at raising awareness at home through development education, or campaigns to citizens and organization of events sensitizing citizens towards global challenges. Table 1 compiles the diversification of types of decentralized cooperation in development at the sub-state level. Table 2 illustrates the adoption of particular modalities by selected sub-state governments.

Table 1. Forms of decentralized cooperation in Europe

EXTERNAL							DOMESTIC	
Direct					Delegated	Indirect	Towards own citizens	Towards citizens of partner countries
Vertical		Horizontal						
Aid transfers, budget supports, directed subsidies	Through agency as the executive body	Transfer of know-how	Peer-to-peer, mutual learning	Exchange of practices, innovations	Technical cooperation, exchange of experience	Through NGOs, CSOs	Raising awareness activities	Scholarships for students, workers, interns

Source: Own compilation based on OECD (2018), de Lossada Passols (2017) and interviews.

Table 2. Application of particular forms by the selected sub-state governments

				Flanders	Wallonia	Scotland	Wales	Catalonia	Baden-Württemberg	Hamburg
EXTERNAL	DIRECT	Vertical	Aid transfer (ODA), budget support, direct subsidies for projects, grant mechanisms	YES	YES *	YES *	YES *	YES	YES *	YES
			Through agency	until 2013	-	-	-	YES	-	-
		Horizontal	Peer-to-peer & mutual learning	YES	YES	YES	YES	-	-	YES
			Transfer of know-how (partnership)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
			Exchange of practices or innovations	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	DELEGATED COOPERATION	Technical cooperation, exchange of practices		YES	-	-	-	YES	-	-
	INDIRECT	Implementation through NGOs, CSOs; supporting non-state sector		YES **	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DOMESTIC	TOWARDS OWN CITIZENS	Raising awareness at home		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	TOWARDS PARTNER-COUNTRY CITIZENS	Scholarships (education, vocational learning)		-	-	-	-	-	YES	YES

*(grant mechanism only) **(limited to partners) Source: Own compilation based on interviews, OECD (2018), documents.

Direct cooperation based on a partnership between the local authorities in North- and South-partner countries remains the most common type of decentralized cooperation (de Losada Passols, 2017). Historically, the direct bilateral cooperation between North and South partner countries was conducted in a vertical form that was built upon the asymmetry between two parties. Against this backdrop, the vertical cooperation addressed in its early days the transfer of knowledge and resources from a developed to a developing country. Deriving from the literature on the organization and management studies, the transfer of knowledge simply refers to the replication of routines and connected behaviors “coordinating the actions of multiple individuals to produce a consistent output” (Szulanski *et al.*, 2004, p. 611). It, therefore, characterizes the process between two parties (senders-receivers) taking place at a particular time and is conducted through selected mechanisms (Ciabuschi *et al.*, 2011, p. 132). However, with the changing nature of global development cooperation and the international debate on the aid/development effectiveness, the vertical approach to the transfer of knowledge has been replaced through the horizontal approach, thus explicitly referring to the concept of partnership. It should not, however, be understood that the vertical approach to decentralized cooperation has been abandoned. On the contrary, some research suggests its predominance (OECD, 2018, p. 34). Nevertheless, in current efforts, the vertical approach prevailed mainly in a form of funds transfer, co-financing projects through direct aid transfer, direct subsidies to projects or creation of grant mechanisms for the stakeholders to apply for financial support to manage the projects. On some occasions, the relatively resourceful entities, as Flanders or Catalonia also deliver direct funding in a form of budget support to national authorities in South-partner countries.

Although, the most recognized and common modality is a partnership, in some cases the regional governments adopt an agency modality. Under such modality, an institutionalized agency functions as an executive body to implement the projects and programs in the field. Although it is not a widespread mechanism in decentralized cooperation and it remains an object of critique (cf. Guljarani, 2015), it is implemented by some regional authorities. In Catalonia, the development policy is coordinated by the Directorate General at the Government dealing with the political dimension of development cooperation, whereas the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation (ACCD) manages the funds allocated by the Government to particular programs, as working in field, and allocates subsidies or launches partnership with NGOs and other local authorities. Also in Flanders, until 2013 the Government implemented the development policy through the agency (FICA), yet due to the organizational reforms and changes the agency has been incorporated into the Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs. In terms of funds allocation in a form of small-grant mechanisms supporting financially small-scale actors and stakeholders in the development, the sub-state governments tend to rely on external bodies, as foundations, networks or partnerships. The grant mechanisms and schemes are managed by the international agency Wallonie-Bruxelles International (Walloon Region), a national organization for non-governmental actors – Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (Wales), the charity foundation Corra Foundation (Scotland), or the non-governmental foundation Stiftung Entwicklungs-Zusammenarbeit (Baden Württemberg).

Along with the conventional asymmetrical vertical modality, a new modality of direct cooperation gained more salience. The increasingly appreciated added-value of decentralized cooperation is the distinction of a horizontal approach to development cooperation as an additional component to traditional

modalities. The horizontal dimension refers to transfers from sub-state authorities in developed countries to partners in developing countries based on a more equal level (OECD, 2018, p. 34) due to the implementation of notions of reciprocity and mutual interest, and common benefits (Zapata Garesche, 2008, p. 103). As noted in the study commissioned by the European Parliament (European Parliament, 2017), a shift in paradigm occurs in international cooperation in a way that abandons the traditional mechanisms based on a donor-recipient relationship that was predominantly focused on financial flows at the inter-state level. A new paradigm extended by the decentralized cooperation promotes inter-partner relations that go beyond aid flows, towards a more integrated approach that supports other than financial instruments tailored to particular partners. Critical for this horizontal shift is the partnership modality reflecting structured and mutual relations through both bilateral and multilateral channels. The partnership relates to two dimensions. First, partnership manifests in the procedures. As confirmed in the interviews, partnership refers to the cooperation which is mainly managed and implemented by actors in the partner countries, with the assistance and support from North-partner countries. In order not to take control over the whole process, the presence of a North-partner country is minimized and the initiative, management, and implementation stay at the responsibility of a South-partner country. The actorness is not limited to local and regional authorities since the non-governmental sector in the partner country plays a crucial role. The idea behind the horizontal approach to development cooperation is the transfer of non-financial resources and sharing best practices. Second, partnership manifests with regard to the field of expertise. As confirmed in the interviews, the idea of partnership is to launch cooperation in areas in which North-partner countries have the necessary experience and expertise (e.g. promotion of fair trade by Wales, administrative capacity building by Flanders, healthcare by Catalonia, waste management by Baden-Württemberg, police training by Scotland). As a consequence, through the horizontal dimension sub-state governments are engaged in sharing knowledge and know-how, peer-to-peer learning, training, and professional exchanges.

Although direct cooperation is the most common form of partnership, in some cases sub-state governments lack political and economic resources to engage, therefore the development cooperation is limited to indirect cooperation. Through this modality, the sub-state governments provide only financial support to the locally based NGOs and CSOs and leave the process of designing, managing and implementing the particular projects to them. This modality is well-spread among the sub-state governments mainly due to the fact that locally based NGOs and CSOs were present in developing countries since the 1970s and 1980, even before the institutionalization of development policy at the local governmental level. Back in the 1980s, under the terms of the so-called *new policy agenda* NGOs were seen as a market-based actor able to deliver basic services directly to local communities in a more effective way than central governments (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 849). Although nearly all selected sub-state governments cooperate with NGOs and CSOs based in their particular regions, the incentives derive not from the governments. For Hamburg, the political institutionalization of engagement in international cooperation was a consequence of the intention to support the Hamburg-based NGOs that were active in humanitarian and development assistance in the post-conflict countries since the 1980s. For Wales, the launch of development assistance was triggered by the pressure imposed on the Welsh Government by the locally based NGOs

sector engaged in development cooperation. Similarly, bottom-up process took place in Wallonia, where the Council of Wallonia-Brussels for the International Cooperation (*Le Conseil Wallonie-Bruxelles de la Coopération Internationale*, CWBCI) was established as a “unique initiative in Belgium, a response from the public authorities to demands of actors [cooperating] in indirect bilateral cooperation, [which was] born in the early 1990s” (Wallonie-Bruxelles International, 2019, p. 30). In terms of total volumes, the exceptionally intense cooperation through the indirect modality is exercised by the Spanish autonomous regions (cf. Pérez, 2018, pp. 23-24).

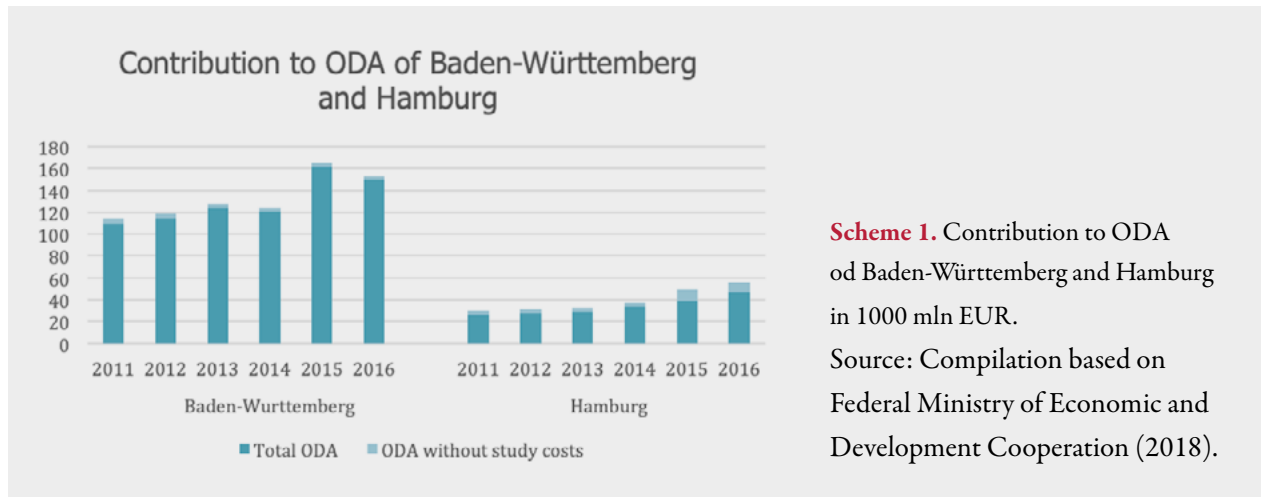
The specific instrument of an external dimension of cooperation in development is the so-called delegated cooperation, traditionally reserved for national agencies in charge of development cooperation (de Losada Passols, 2017, p. 11). Delegated cooperation allows for delegation of authority from the delegating party to the other donor who remains strategic for the partner country or donor, and where a financial gap exists (European Commission, 2007). Under the framework of delegated cooperation agreements, a donor to whom authority is delegated (leading donor) acts on behalf of the primary donor in terms of funds administration or dialogue with the partner government. Succinctly, a delegating donor supports financially a leading donor, but it does not participate in a dialogue with a partner country. Although on the European level it is still not a common instrument among regions, the practice of Flanders and Catalonia in the health sector in Mozambique is widely recognized. As confirmed in the interviews, the delegated cooperation between these two authorities derived from the necessity in the field. As noted in the literature, the current Flanders’ experience in areas such as decentralized sexual and reproductive health research and treatment which was practiced in Mozambique, or the agriculture promotion at a provincial level in South Africa would “bring useful multi-level governance insights to the joint donor policy dialogue at the national level” (Waeterloos and Renard, 2013, p. 339).

The external dimension of cooperation in development is also complemented by the domestic forms of intervention. In this aspect the activities such as development education or raising awareness at home, aimed at mobilizing citizens for the promotion of sustainable development, as well as the promotion of a better understanding of the current global challenges are critical. As noted in the study by the OECD it is specifically the role of regional governments to

contribute to raising awareness and facilitating education campaigns, fostering technical cooperation (...) and regional economic development through decentralized development cooperation (OECD, 2018, p. 30).

The specific form of domestic intervention in decentralized cooperation is the system of scholarships provided for students and professionals, which is a characteristic feature of German federal states, rarely used by other sub-state governments in Europe. The practice of hosting students and interns from developing countries (e.g. Bavarian Government hosted students from Iran and Ethiopia) can be traced back to the early 1950s, yet back then the internship program was seen more as a compensation policy rather than regular development assistance (Athenstaedt, 2011, p. 62). As estimated, between 1956 and 1960 approximately 3000 interns were trained and about 900 scholarships were financed (Dumke, 1997, pp. 32-34). However, with the changes to the German approach to development assistance policy over the recent

decades (cf. Engel, 2002; Bücking, 1998), the issues of education have become more associated with development cooperation rather than the compensation policy. Until today, the imputed student costs remain a significant contribution of German federal states to development cooperation, exceptionally exceeding other funds, which illustrates Scheme 1.



3. Principles of decentralized cooperation in development

The diversification of modalities and forms of decentralized cooperation, along with the divergent competencies assigned in the constitutional settings (cf. Michelmann, 2009), brings about the multiplicity of concepts behind the policies of particular sub-state governments. The following part introduces the characteristic principles guiding development cooperation policy exercised by selected sub-state governments.

3.1. Coordination: Flemish government

The concept of coordination in development cooperation refers to the management of the development policy in a way that stays in compliance with the international standards of development effectiveness set by the international community. As mentioned, the traditional landscape of donors in development cooperation was dominated by states and international organizations as the actors that set and implement the norms and standards in development cooperation. Yet, the irreversibly rising presence of new stakeholders in development gave rise to debates over the effectiveness of such dispersion. Central arguments are the harmonization and coordination of donors endorsed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), Accra Agenda for Action (2008), and the Busan Partnership (2011). Although the principles of such commitments were addressed mainly to traditional donors, some sub-state governments made also efforts to comply with the international agenda. In this regard, Flanders makes an exceptional effort since the government “has also gradually re-shaped [bilateral aid policy] along with the Paris principles and commitments” (Waeterloos and Renard, 2013, p. 330). According to the *in*

foro interno in foro externo principle, the Flemish government is permitted to conduct foreign policy in such domains that remain under the control of the government internally. Consequently, the government is assigned with power to conclude treaties, send representatives to multilateral organizations, participate in the negotiation process in multilateral meetings or force its interests through transnational networks. However, as noted in the literature, the participation and impact of such transnational networks in areas as sustainable development are not impressive (cf. Happaerts, 2011). David Crikemans, stressing the distinctiveness of the Flanders' Government among other European sub-state governments, emphasizes the "vertical organizational structure" as a distinctive feature. In such a model the Department of Foreign Affairs plays the central role as being responsible for the coordination and integration of the foreign policy (Crikemans, 2010, p. 42). The coordination of policy in the context of development assistance brings the Flanders' government closer to traditional donors. Despite the current efforts to comply with international standards through coordination, a traditional donor-like approach to development cooperation is endorsed in other dimensions. Flemish Government delivers ODA through bilateral and multilateral channels to a greater extent than through national institutions. More importantly, it promotes only management and coordination of development programs rather than the implementation which is left in the hands of partner actors (OECD, 2018, p. 109).

3.2. Responsiveness: Scottish government

With the introduction of Millennium Development Goals, followed by the Sustainable Development Goals, the development cooperation has begun to be promoted as "everyone's issue", a global challenge requiring the engagement of all individuals, groups, states, and organizations. As a response to that, a number of sub-state governments developed their international strategies, incorporating aspects of international development, based on the principles of solidarity and responsibility. Such responsiveness has been extensively promoted by the Scottish Government since 2005, yet accelerated in recent years through the adoption of two documents: Scottish International Framework (2015) and Scotland's International Development Strategy (2016). Although the history of Scottish-African relations can be traced back to the 19th century with the prominent role of missionaries, churches, and civil servants (cf. Adogane and Lawrence, 2014), the fresh re-linking at the governmental level came into existence with the establishment of a civil society alliance called Scotland-Malawi Partnership in 2004. The establishment coincided with the devolution process in the Scottish Government (Ross, 2014, p. 312). In the International Framework that sets the directions of Scottish international engagement, the Government labeled its global engagement as a part of being a "good global citizen", which denotes "[making] distinctive contributions in addressing global challenges such as climate change, tackling inequality and promoting human rights (...) for global good" (The Scottish Government, 2015). It was a distinctive aspect of international cooperation in international development, the policy of which is exercised in compliance with the MDGs, and SDGs. In light of that, Scotland's International Development Strategy "*responds* [highlighted by: MK] to the Global Goals" of reducing poverty worldwide (The Scottish Government, 2016). Such responsiveness is strictly related to the ambition of the Scottish Government to play a unique and distinctive global role in

finding solutions to global crises. The notion of a *good global citizen* highlights, therefore, the normative dimension of the Scottish global engagement, which masks out the political motivations behind the engagement of which the Scottish Government is accused (cf. Gibson, 2016).

3.3. Participation: Baden-Württemberg's government

Due to the close cooperation with the locally based non-governmental sector and through the promotion of citizen initiatives in development, the sub-state governments are channels for fostering a participatory approach to development. Practically, a participatory approach to development is associated with grass-roots development practices. It attempts to replace the conventional top-down and state-centric practices with the plurality of actors and practices that in a consequence generate extension of development goals and strengthen the self-determination of communities, and as such are associated with civil society, including NGOs (Mohan, 2014, p. 207). As opposed to an expert-driven approach (Bano, 2008), the participatory approach is based on the inclusion of a local community in the development process, with the respect to local knowledge, customs and needs (cf. Jamal *et al.*, 2014). Although a feasible participatory development process generates significant costs (Jamal *et al.*, 2014), the assessment of NGOs' performance in the creation of a participatory approach is relatively positive (cf. Mohan, 2014). Operationally, the participatory approach to development processes contains various dimensions: (1) agenda-setting, as the incorporation of local community in the decision-making about development policies and the consultations; (2) efficiency, as involvement of a community at the implementation stage; (3) empowerment, as linking participation with raising awareness and confidence (Willis, 2005, p. 103).

For German federal states, the support for civil society and NGOs remains an important part of their development cooperation policies, which in some cases become formally institutionalized (Athenstaedt, 2011, p. 81). The sub-state governments support the non-governmental organizations not only through the conventional channels but the cooperation also goes beyond the financial assistance and grant mechanisms. The tangible example of creating a participatory milieu for citizens and NGOs comes from the government of Baden-Württemberg, where the participation of civil society remains a characteristic feature of the government's development policy. In 2012 the government led an initiative "World: Citizens Consulted!" through which over 1500 citizens and 120 organizations from the region were consulted in a participatory dialogue process leading to the development of new policy guidelines in development cooperation. In consequence of dialogue and a series of conferences with the organizations, the advisory board appointed by the government evaluated and defined action proposals that provided the basis for the government's guidelines adopted in 2013. Participation is guaranteed at different stages. First, a dialogue with citizens on a development policy is a permanent mechanism that allows for the annual gatherings of all engaged participants at the Annual Development Policy Conferences. Second, through the advisory board, a wide spectrum of actors (churches, municipalities, foundations, and agencies) actively shape and influence the directions of Baden-Württemberg's development policy. Third, non-governmental actors are also involved in the implementation of particular projects as well as in the process of controlling and monitoring the government's activities (State

Ministry of the Baden-Württemberg, 2013). Beyond the political process, the government also supports citizens' initiatives in raising awareness, promoting and advising citizens through established foundations – Stiftung Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, and Baden-Württemberg Stiftung.

3.4. Reciprocity and mutual benefits: Welsh government

The concept of reciprocity in development cooperation refers to the practice of exchange which results in mutual benefits based on common goals. In cases where the development cooperation is relatively small in terms of total volume, the reciprocity becomes a guiding principle which justifies the engagement of stakeholders. Also, as noted in the literature, mutual benefits are especially important where there is no clear constitutional basis for regional governments to take action in development assistance. In general, the Welsh Government is limited in its activities. On the ground of the UK's regulation, international development remains a reserved issue. Due to such limitations, the Welsh government incorporated the concept of mutual benefits for Welsh people and partner countries as a central argument justifying the Governments' actions abroad (Wyn Jones, Royles, 2012, p. 260). The argument behind the reciprocity principle is that both parties would benefit from the experience of linking communities under the so-called scheme of Community Links between Wales and Africa in sectors such as education or healthcare, mainly in Lesotho and Uganda. The existence of such links provided a base for the Welsh Government to get involved politically (Anyimadu, 2011, p. 12). In 2006, the Welsh Government launched its flagship program in development cooperation – Wales for Africa – intended to encourage and support civil society in the field. The reciprocity is tangibly articulated in a form of small-scale grant mechanisms coordinated by the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) funded by the Welsh Government. In order to apply for a grant, the entity is required to be based in Wales, and “clearly demonstrate a benefit to Wales” (Welsh Council for Voluntary Action, 2019). Even though it stays at the center of Welsh Government's policy the concept of reciprocity is hindered due to the weakness of civil society sectors in Welsh partner countries (Anyimadu, 2011, p. 15).

Conclusion

Although the sub-state governments are rising actors in development cooperation and their international policies are becoming more institutionalized, there are no general patterns of forms or modalities provided by second-tier governments. There are, though, visible trends and directions. First, the traditional direct cooperation which conventionally was provided through vertical cooperation is now subsided to by the horizontal dimension. The latter refers to the principles of partnership based on respect to the local knowledge and equality, as well as to the reciprocity principle. Second, sub-state governments become visible in the forms of development cooperation which were conventionally limited to traditional donors, for instance delegated cooperation. Although delegated cooperation remains still uncommon among sub-state governments, the experience of Flanders and Catalonia in Mozambique has been recognized as a

successful effort. Third, the external dimension is complemented by the internal dimension. With the limited capacity and resources, yet with access to citizens, sub-state governments do not only intervene in the field in developing countries, but they play a crucial role in raising awareness at home. Subsequently, as shown, there are different principles and key ideas behind the engagement of sub-state governments in decentralized cooperation. The sub-state governments may act as traditional donors and provide decentralized cooperation based on the coordination principle (Flanders), or they may present their engagement as an imperative to respond to global challenges (Scotland), or base their development policy on a participatory approach (Baden-Württemberg) or rely on mutual benefits and reciprocity (Wales).

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